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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities
Forty-fourth session
Agenda item 6

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING POLICIES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION AND OF APARTHEID, IN ALL COUNTRIES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMISSION UNDER COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION 8 (XXIII)

Letter dated 31 July 1992 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights

Sir,

Further to our recent conversation I have the honour to request you to distribute, as an official document for the forty-fourth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the texts of the declaration and resolution of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation on the question of human rights in the Baltic States, which were transmitted to you with our note No. 250 of 21 July 1992 (copies attached).

(Signed) E. Makeev
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

GE.92-12926/4862H

DECLARATION OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE BALTIC STATES

"There is growing concern in Russia about the worsening of inter-ethnic relations in the Baltic States, where the number of ethnic Russians is two and a half million. Hundreds of thousands of permanent residents of those States have been deprived of their citizenship, and many of them are losing their jobs and are every day subjected to psychological pressure. A policy of expelling the representatives of ethnic minorities beyond the borders of those States is being openly pursued, and restrictions are being imposed on residents' contacts with their relatives in States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The Russian Federation has repeatedly proposed to the Baltic States the adoption of appropriate measures for the full implementation of treaties on the basic principles of inter-State relations between the Russian Federation and each of the three Baltic States. A proposal has also been made to supplement those treaties with more specific bilateral agreements and to arrange for their implementation to be monitored by the international community.

However, these efforts are meeting with no understanding from the authorities in the Baltic countries.

Programmes for the building of mono-ethnic States are being openly proclaimed in the political circles of Latvia and Estonia.

In the past few months Russia has endeavoured to use the CSCE mechanism to deal with the violation of human rights in the Baltic States. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation has repeatedly made statements and sent notes to the ambassadors of Latvia and Estonia. However, no real progress has been made with regard to this matter. The human rights situation is continuing to worsen.

For many years demands were made that Russia should observe human rights. Those demands were correct and just. Now Russia insists that the rights and freedoms of millions of its fellow-countrymen must be protected. The Supreme Council of the Russian Federation resolutely rejects the inclusion, in the legislation of the Baltic States, of provisions which establish discrimination on the basis of nationality as the norm, will lead to an increase in social and political tension, and are having a harmful effect on regional stability."

RESOLUTION OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ESTONIA

"The Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, having considered the problem of guaranteeing human rights in Estonia in the light of the implementation of the Treaty on the Basic Principles of Inter-State Relations between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Republic of Estonia, notes that:

The current legal basis for the conduct of inter-State relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Estonia is the Treaty on the Basic Principles of Inter-State Relations between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Republic of Estonia of 12 January 1991. This treaty can serve as an effective instrument for the settlement, between the parties, of questions of mutual interest.

However, specific provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, a number of laws and decrees of the Supreme Council of Estonia adopted after the signing and ratification of the Treaty, and practical steps taken by the State institutes of the Republic of Estonia grossly violate the articles of the Treaty and are creating a danger of acute inter-ethnic conflict in Estonia.

The Supreme Council of the Russian Federation resolves:

1. To draw the attention of the Government of the Russian Federation to the inadmissibility of any departure from the spirit and letter of the Treaty on the Basic Principles of Inter-State Relations between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Republic of Estonia of 12 January 1991 in negotiations between the State delegations of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Estonia.

2. To consider as the main task at the negotiations the settlement of questions relating to citizenship, guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of citizens of one party in the territory of the other and the protection of the rights of national minorities, with a view to creating, for persons of Russian origin in Estonia and of Estonian origin in Russia, appropriate opportunities in education, culture and religion, including the provision of help for citizens of one party returning to the territory of the other.

3. To call upon the Government of the Russian Federation to settle at once the question of the allocation of the necessary funds for the operation of the Embassy of the Russian Federation and the opening of consular premises in places inhabited by large numbers of Russians and Russian-speakers in Estonia.

4. If gross violations of human rights continue in Estonia, to call upon the Government of the Russian Federation, to bring the matter before the United Nations at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly, even calling for the adoption of international economic sanctions against Estonia, and before international inter-parliamentary bodies.

5. To call upon the Government of the Russian Federation to consider the possibility of imposing temporary economic sanctions on the Republic of Estonia if the Estonian authorities continue their discrimination against ethnic Russians.

6. In view of the illegal actions of the Estonian authorities, official claims to russian territory and acts of terror against Russian citizens, the Supreme Council's committees responsible for inter-republic relations and international affairs are instructed to prepare, by 20 September, a draft Supreme Council resolution on temporary suspension of the State Treaty between Russia and Estonia".

July 1992